

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 032207

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS FOR DR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT LILONGWE 0192 ACTION SECSTATE
INFO CAPE TOWN DAR ES SALAAM GABORONE LAGOS LUSAKA MAPUTO
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QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0192

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, MI
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: POSSIBLE INTERNAL AGREEMENT AND POSSIBLE
CONSEQUENCES

REF: STATE 029697

BEGIN SUMMARY: IT IS LIKELY THAT THE GOM WOULD BE
VERY PLEASED IF BLACK POWER WERE ACHIEVED IN RHODESIA BY
AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT. PRESIDENT BANDA HAS LONG CON-
SIDERED REV. SITHOLE AS HIS PROTEGE AND PROBABLY SHARES
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THE LATTER'S OPINION THAT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS A
REAL POSSIBILITY. HE HAS LONG KNOWN NKOMO AND
DOES NOT TRUST HIS CHARACTER AND IS SUSPICIOUS AND CON-
CERNED ABOUT THE SOVIET-CUBAN-MARXIST BACKING HE AND
MUGABE ARE RECEIVING. WITH AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT,
BANDA BELIEVES THAT MOST OF THE GUERRILLA FORCES
WOULD LOSE THEIR MOTIVATION, THEIR WILL TO FIGHT, AND
THEIR INTERNAL SUPPORT. THE GOM WOULD EXPECT THE USG NOT
TO CONDEMN AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH IT ITSELF
WOULD PROBABLY NOT IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE SUCH A GOVERN-

MENT. IN MY VIEW, THE USG SHOULD ADOPT A "WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE" IF AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT OCCURS, NEITHER CONDEMNING NOR APPROVING, BUT SEEKING TO CONTINUE CONVERSATIONS RE THOSE PARTS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS WHICH MIGHT STILL BE PERTINENT. END SUMMARY

1. I HAVE NOT HAD OCCASION TO TALK BUSINESS WITH BANDA FOR SOME MONTHS AND JUDGMENT OF HOST GOVERNMENT WOULD BE HIS ALONE. HOWEVER, IN PAST HE HAS INDICATED HIS BELIEF THAT AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AND HAS LEFT NO DOUBT THAT HE WOULD MUCH PREFER A ZIMBABWE GOVERNED BY MUZOREWA-SITHOLE RATHER THAN NKOMO-MUGABE. NOT ONLY DOES HE DISTRUST NKOMO AS A MAN WHOSE ONLY BASIC MOTIVATION IS ACHIEVEMENT OF POWER AND WHO "ONCE BETRAYED THE NATIONALIST CAUSE", BUT HE FEARS THE SOVIET-CUBAN MARXIST SUPPORT BEHIND HIM. SINCE HE IS PERSONALLY CLOSE TO SITHOLE AND TALKED WITH HIM HERE LAST MONTH, I WOULD ESTIMATE THAT HE SHARES SITHOLE'S OPINION THAT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS A REAL POSSIBILITY. AT THE SAME TIME, FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, EDITORIALS IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED DAILY TIMES HAVE SUPPORTED THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AND HAVE COMMENTED UPON AND RECOGNIZED POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED FIGHTING IF REPRESENTATIVES OF GUERRILLA FORCES ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT INVOLVED IN A FINAL SETTLEMENT. VERY PROBABLY HE GENUINELY BELIEVES THAT SITHOLE IN HIS OWN RIGHT HAS A CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT AMONG THE ZANU FIGHTERS. TYPICALLY, BANDA WOULD LIKE TO STAY UNCOMMITTED, AT LEAST PUBLICLY, AS LONG AS THE SITUATION REMAINS FLUID AND UNCERTAIN.

2. BANDA HAS INDICATED TO ME IN PAST HIS BELIEF THAT IF AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT IS REACHED WHICH DEMONSTRATES BLACK AFRICANS ARE OR WILL BE ESSENTIALLY IN FULL CONTROL OF THE ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT, THE GUERRILLAS WILL NOT HAVE THE WILL TO CONTINUE FIGHTING. HE THINKS KAUNDA WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE HIS SUPPORT FOR NKOMO UNDER THIS CIRCUMSTANCE; ALSO, THAT WITHIN A FEW MONTHS A MAJORITY OF THE BLACK AFRICAN STATES WOULD SUPPORT THE NEW BLACK GOVERNMENT DESPITE CONTINUED OPPOSITION FROM THE FRONT LINE STATES. HE FEELS STRONGLY THAT THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS' ENDORSEMENT OF THE PF WAS GROSS INTERFERENCE IN RHODESIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF BLACK RHODESIANS SHARE THIS VIEW. I THINK HE WOULD ANTICIPATE A GRADUAL WITHERING AWAY OF THE WHITE PRESENCE IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT (AS OCCURED IN MALAWI) AND WOULD NOT BE CONCERNED AT A CONTINUED WHITE POSITION IN THE ARMED FORCES.

RECENTLY I HAD A CONVERSATION ON SUBJECT OF RHODESIA WITH A VERY INTELLIGENT YOUNG MALAWIAN OFFICIAL, GEOFF SHABA, WITH A DEGREE FROM USC, WHO LIVED FOR 20 YEARS IN

RHODESIA. HE EXPRESSED THE FIRM CONVICTION THAT NKOMO IS UNABLE TO COMMAND MORE THAN THE APPROXIMATELY 25 PERCENT SUPPORT HE HAS FROM THE MATABELE ELEMENT IN RHODESIA AND THAT NKOMO WILL THEREFORE NEVER AGREE TO A SOLUTION IN WHICH HE WILL BE UNABLE TO CONTROL AND MANIPULATE POLICE AND OTHER CIVIL POWERS. SHABA FEARS THAT THERE WILL BE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CIVIL STRIFE IN ZIMBABWE IN EITHER EVENTUALITY, I.E. SHOULD AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT BE REACHED OR AN AGREEMENT INCLUDING ALL THE PARTIES UNDER THE
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PRESENT ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. HE THINKS THE PROSPECTS FOR SERIOUS CIVIL STRIFE ARE MUCH GREATER, HOWEVER, IN A GOVERNMENT IN WHICH NKOMO/MUGABE WOULD CONTROL OR SHARE POWER THAN IN A GOVERNMENT DOMINATED SOLELY BY MUZOREWA/SITHOLE, WHICH WOULD COMMAND MOST OF THE SUPPORT OF THE 75 PERCENT SHONA ELEMENT IN THE COUNTRY. HE THEREFORE FAVORS THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND BELIEVES SUPPORT FOR THE GUERRILLAS WILL RAPIDLY VANISH WITHIN THE COUNTRY. VARIOUS OTHER MALAWIANS WITH EDUCATIONAL OR OTHER TIES TO RHODESIA HAVE EXPRESSED A SIMILAR OPINION TO ME AND BANDA UNDOUBTEDLY HAS THE SUPPORT OF MOST POLITICALLY AWARE MALAWIANS RE HIS APPROACH TO RHODESIAN PROBLEM.

3. THE GOM WOULD VERY LIKELY RECOGNIZE A BLACK GOVERNMENT INSTALLED IN POWER BY AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGH IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT RUSH TO DO SO. IT WOULD NOT BE OVERLY INFLUENCED BY AN OAU DECISION NOT TO RECOGNIZE THE NEW GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, IF MALAWI WERE TO BE THE SOLE MEMBER OPPOSING THIS POSITION, BANDA WOULD PROBABLY PROCRASTINATE FOR SOME TIME. IF A FEW OTHER BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES WERE INCLINED TO RECOGNIZE OR WERE NEUTRAL ON THE SUBJECT, I THINK THE GOM WOULD MOVE MORE QUICKLY. AS TO WHAT THE GOM WOULD EXPECT OF THE USG, I THINK IT WOULD HOPE THAT WE WOULD NOT CONDEMN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT OUT OF HAND BUT WOULD ADOPT A WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE. FROM VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH MALAWIAN OFFICIALS, I KNOW THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE FEELING WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE USG FAVORS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, DESPITE OUR ASSURANCES THAT WE HAVE NOT "FAVORED" ANY ONE OF THE NATIONALIST ELEMENTS. IT HAS OFTEN SEEMED TO ME THAT WHAT THEY ARE REALLY THINKING IS THAT THE U.S. SHOULD, IN ITS OWN INTEREST, FAVOR SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA AS BEING MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF MODERATION AND ALIGNMENT WITH THE WEST.
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CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED BY VARIOUS OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE MALAWI ARMY, THAT WITH A GOVERNMENT IN ZIMBABWE DOMINATED BY MARXISTS, THE OLD TRADE CONNECTIONS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO RE-ESTABLISH AND THAT SUCH A

ZIMBABWE WOULD TRY TO STIMULATE ACTION TO OVERTHROW THE BANDA REGIME. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS ARE AMONG THOSE OPEN TO US IN THE EVENT OF AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT.

A. CONDEMNATION

ADVANTAGES:

1. FRONT LINE STATES AND PATRIOTIC FRONT MIGHT BE MORE FAVORABLY INCLINED TO SEEK A SOLUTION ALONG THE LINES OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL.

DISADVANTAGES:

1. WOULD PUT THE U.S. IN THE ANOMALOUS POSITION OF SEEMING TO REJECT FORCES OF MODERATION AND LINING UP WITH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS IN SUPPORT OF THE FORCES OF VIOLENCE.

2. WOULD BE, AT A MINIMUM, EMBARRASSING FOR THE U.S. IF THE SETTLEMENT LEADS EVENTUALLY TO A BLACK GOVERNMENT ACCEPTABLE TO THE OAU OR EVEN TO A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

3. WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE SUPPORTED BY A NUMBER OF OUR WESTERN ALLIES INCLUDING WEST GERMANY, FRANCE, AND CANADA.

4. WOULD ENCOURAGE THE PF TO CONTINUE THE GUERRILLA WAR.

B. IMMEDIATE APPROVAL

ADVANTAGES:

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1. WOULD BE FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY THE MORE MODERATE BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

2. WOULD ENABLE US TO BEGIN WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE NEW REGIME TO HELP IT CONSOLIDATE ITS POWER AND MOVE TO THE CREATION OF A VIABLE MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY.

3. MIGHT MAKE IT MORE EASY FOR US TO WORK WITH SOUTH AFRICA WITH REGARD TO NAMIBIA AND PERHAPS OTHER PROBLEMS AS WELL.

DISADVANTAGES:

1. LEFTIST AND EVEN SOME NON-ALIGNED AFRICAN STATES (SIGNIFICANTLY NIGERIA) WOULD SUSPECT WE WERE AGAIN SHOWING OUR "TRUE COLOR" (WHITE) AND MIGHT BE MORE INCLINED TOWARD EVEN GREATER SOVIET SUPPORT.

2. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD CERTAINLY TURN EVEN MORE TO THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS AND THUS GIVE

FURTHER IMPETUS TO THE POLARIZATION OF THE BLACK/WHITE
STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AS A "MARXISTS WITH THE BLACKS CAUSE"
VERSUS
"WESTERN DEMOCRACIES WITH THE
WHITES."

C. ADOPT A WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE, I.E., DO
NOT DECRY THE SETTLEMENT BUT EXPRESS REGRET THAT THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT IS NOT REPRESENTED. ENCOURAGE FURTHER
NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE "NEW GOVERNMENT" AND THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT, FOCUSING ON THOSE ASPECTS AND PARTS OF
THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD STILL BE
PERTINENT. SEEK TO CONTINUE, TOGETHER WITH THE BRITISH,
OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.
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ADVANTAGES:

1. ALL PARTIES WOULD SEE THAT WE ARE NEUTRAL
IN SEEKING A JUST SETTLEMENT.
2. FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE FIGHTING WOULD
NOT BE ENCOURAGED.
3. THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE FRONT
LINE STATES WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY OUR POSITION TO THE
EXTENT THAT THEY WOULD REFRAIN FROM EXTREME POSITIONS OF
DECLARED HOSTILITY TO THE NEW REGIME AND WOULD BE
ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH US.
4. IT WOULD GIVE THE U.S. FLEXIBILITY--
WE CAN RESERVE FINAL JUDGMENT AND ACTION UNTIL WE SEE WHAT
THE SETTLEMENT REALLY AMOUNTS TO. IT WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE
INCREASED SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT-- AT LEAST IT WOULD
NOT PROVIDE AN OSTENSIBLE BASIS FOR JUSTIFYING IT.

DISADVANTAGES:

1. THE U.S. WILL COME IN FOR FLAK AND CRITICISM
FROM BOTH THE RIGHT AND LEFT BOTH WITHIN AFRICA AND
IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD AS WELL.
4. OBVIOUSLY I WOULD RECOMMEND OPTION 3. I HAVE FELT
FOR SOME TIME THAT WE MAY WELL BE OVERESTIMATING THE
WILLINGNESS AND COMMITMENT OF THE GUERRILLAS TO A CONTINUED
STRUGGLE SHOULD A BLACK GOVERNMENT COME TO POWER IN
ZIMBABWE THROUGH AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. I QUESTION IN SUCH
CASE THAT THE IDEOLOGICAL AND/OR PERSONAL LOYALTY
TO NKOMO AND MUGABE IS SUFFICIENTLY IMBUED AMONG THE
GUERRILLAS TO PERMIT CONTINUED OPERATIONS AT THE PRESENT
SCALE. I AM REMINDED THAT WHAT BROUGHT CASTRO TO POWER IN
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CUBA WAS NOT IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENT, EVEN AMONG MOST OF
HIS GUERRILLAS, BUT RATHER A BROADLY SHARED DESIRE TO THROW OUT
BATISTA AND I SUSPECT THE CHIEF MOTIVATION OF MOST OF THE
GUERRILLAS IN THIS CASE IS TO GET RID OF SMITH AND WHITE CONTROL.
STEVENSON
UNQUOTE VANCE

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